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Ex-Rep. Hanna Is Sentenced to Prison in Korean Influence-Buying Case

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 24—An apologetic Richard T. Hanna, a former Democratic Representative from California, was sentenced today to from six to 30 months in prison for conspiring to defraud the United States in the Korean influence-buying scandal.

Mr. Hanna was the first person to be sent to prison since the investigation into the Korean effort to sway American policy began more than two years ago. He could have received a five-year sentence and a \$10,000 fine.

William B. Bryant, chief judge of the Federal District Court for the District of Columbia, imposed the sentence without comment after listening to Mr. Hanna's attorney, Charles A. McNelis, plead for leniency and to Mr. Hanna make his apology and promise to atone for his misdeeds.

Mr. McNelis argued that Mr. Hanna, who was convicted of conspiring with Tongsun Park, the Korean businessman accused of influence-buying in Congress, "was not then and is not now a Judas Iscariot; he was not then and is not now a Benedict Arnold."

Hanna's Brief Apology

Mr. Hanna spoke briefly in a taut, cracking voice, saying, "I apologize as a person who held public office and who has had to plead to a count that brings me here," and added, "I apologize for being here."

Mr. Hanna, who now lives in Fayetteville, Ark., was assigned to the minimum-security prison at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama, and was ordered to report there on May 8.

The 64-year-old former Congressman was indicted last October on 40 counts of conspiracy, bribery, receiving illegal gratuities, mail fraud and failing to register as a foreign agent. On March 27, however, Mr. Hanna struck a plea bargain with the Department of Justice under

which he pleaded guilty to a charge of conspiracy. The 39 other counts were dropped today.

That agreement said: "Richard T. Hanna agreed with Tongsun Park to use the power of his office and position as a member of the United States Congress to further the financial interests of Tongsun Park and to enhance the status of Tongsun Park in the eyes of U.S. Congressmen and officials of the Republic of Korea."

No Restitution Ordered

A 33-page offer of proof submitted by Government attorneys then stated that Mr. Park had given Mr. Hanna more than \$200,000 in checks, cash and other items of value from 1969 to 1975. Mr. Hanna has not been ordered to make restitution, a spokesman for the Justice Department said, because he pleaded guilty to a charge of conspiracy, not to receiving bribes or illegal gratuities.

Further, the spokesman said, Mr. Hanna pleaded guilty to a charge of failing to give the taxpayers the honorable service due them, not to bilking them of funds. If restitution were to be sought, it would have to be in a civil suit filed by Mr. Park, from whom Mr. Hanna received the money.

In response to a question, Mr. McNelis said that Mr. Hanna had met last summer with officials of the Justice Department's tax division and answered all of their questions.

'Fit Subject for Probation'

Mr. McNelis also said that Mr. Hanna's compensation received from Mr. Park was reflected in his income tax returns and that he did not expect Mr. Hanna to have a problem with the Internal Revenue Service, and added that political contributions had been properly reported.

Today, Mr. McNelis tried to persuade Judge Bryant that "Mr. Hanna is a fit subject for probation," citing Mr. Hanna's cooperation with Justice Department officials

and investigators in the Congressional inquiry into the Korean matter.

While Mr. McNelis spoke, Mr. Hanna stood with his head bowed, his hands clasped in front of him and his weight slumped over on his right foot. When he addressed the bench, he was nearly inaudible.

Judge Bryant listened to Mr. McNelis and Mr. Hanna attentively but impassively, occasionally donning eyeglasses to refer to a document. When they finished, he ordered the sentence without admonition or explanation.

Immediately after the sentencing, Mr. Hanna left the courtroom, looking shaken and red-eyed, and declined to comment to reporters. But two hours later, he stood composed in a study lined with law books at Mr. McNelis's office and readily answered questions.

'The Law Has Been Served'

He said that he was not surprised at the sentence and that "I think the law has been served."

Asked whether he thought he was being used as an example, Mr. Hanna shook his head and replied, "The judge had to do that."

On the overall effect of the Korean investigation, however, Mr. Hanna contended that it had "hurt the public image of the Congress," and blamed "overzealous people" in the Justice Department for trying to make the Korean scandal into another Watergate.

Carter News Parley Will Be on TV Today

President Carter is scheduled to hold a news conference at 3 P.M. today. It will be televised live by the three networks and their local stations—Channels 2, 4 and 7. There will be live radio coverage on WCBS-AM, WINS, WMCA and WNYC-AM.